

**ABSTRACT**

The invention describes how contaminant particles may be removed from a surface without in any way damaging that surface. First, the positional co-ordinates of all particles on the surface are recorded. Optionally, only particles that can be expected to cause current or future damage to the surface are included. Then, using optical tweezers, each particle is individually removed and then disposed of. Six different ways to remove and dispose of particles are described.